

MORAL SCENES in a RUSTIC
WALK.

6d.



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The best way to kill Time

MORAL SCENES

IN A

RUSTIC WALK,

OR A

PEDESTRIAN TRIP

TO KILL TIME.

While Health in Exercise we find,
The moral Walk improves the mind.

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MORAL SCENES

IN A

RUSTIC WALK.

MR. Saville's son, Charles, expected an early visit from the young Friendlys, who lived about two miles off. Four and five o'clock passed, to the great mortification of Charles, who could neither sit down to study nor settle his mind to play. His father, willing to relieve his suspense,

proposed to walk over to Mr. Friendly's, and, as was his custom when business did not interfere, to make the occurrences he met with in that walk an instructive and amusing subject of conversation for the evening.

Charles entertained some high notions that virtue and tenderness could not dwell with poor people, but were the possessions of the more affluent. Mr. Saville endeavoured upon every occasion to correct this error, and proposed in their trip to prove that a coarse garb is not inimical to a rich mind and a superfine heart. Charles gladly accepted his father's offer, for he was of an inquisitive turn, which Mr. Saville the
more

more readily strove to gratify, as he generally made it subservient to some moral sketch. To enliven their walk, Dido was to make a third, and it may be remarked, that she preferred her master's company to that of a prince.

When they had reached a short way down the narrow lane that skirted Saville-house, a little boy forced his way through a slight hedge, leaping a small ditch in pursuit of a pretty frisking mouse, that seemed to be nibbling some ears of corn, lying on the side of a cart rut. Throwing his hat at the scampering fugitive, with a slight touch he stopped its progress, and, having seized the prize, tied a piece of packthread to its leg,

then, wrapping it in the corner of his pin-cloth, with a smile of delight and sparkling eyes, he ran past Charles and his father, crying, "I'll take it home, put it into a little cage, and feed it like a bird. I wanted to catch just such a mouse as this—what nice bright eyes he has got!"

"But, my little fellow," said Mr. Saville, "if you keep a cat, he will always be in terror; and, as he has not at any time eaten any of your cakes, you have no right to detain him. I dare say you sometimes feel what a sad thing the loss of liberty is when you are placed under the black rod at school?"

"Yes, I might let him go," replied he archly, "if he would send me another prettier; but I must not
trust

trust to that now. Yonder at the porch sits my grandmother, I'll shew it to her."

"Well, keep it this time," said Mr. Saville, "only treat it well when you are tired of it, and then it cannot call you cruel or capricious; for it is very blaineable in young persons to be in raptures with a thing one moment, and then in the next to neglect or wish it destroyed."

The old woman was attentively knitting in the porch-seat of her cottage, and beside her sat a plough-boy, shelling some field-peas. When Jemmy produced his prize, and said he meant to keep it, she exclaimed, "Keep a mouse, aye child! we who can scarcely keep a cat. But who told
you

you it was a mouse? I am sure it looks more like a young rat, with its long whiskers and tail. Instead of feeding, pray throw it away, or give it puss for supper."

"No, that would be worse than killing it, granny," said James: "no, it shall run by this string about the grass till father comes home, and if he say it is a young rat, I will let it go."

"Let me look at it," said the plough-boy, stooping down, as it frisked merrily on the grass. "I say it is a rat, so there now!" and with one stamp of his large hob-nailed shoe he laid the innocent victim lifeless.

Jemmy gave a loud scream, and, catching the boy by the hair, he exclaimed,

claimed, "Oh that I could kill you as you have killed that pretty mouse!"

Mr. Saville, who saw it was only a mouse, severely censured the boy's cruelty, who replied, that it might or might not have proved a rat, and as for killing, he could kill any thing, as freely as hens or pigs. "If you had not loved cruelty," said Mr. Saville, you would have let it lived for Jemmy's sake, and not have sacrificed it wantonly."

"Dick, Dick," said the old dame, "thou hast as hard a heart as ever beat. If I said it looked like a rat, I did not bid thee kill it." Granny now kissed James, and offered him a halfpenny to dry up his tears, but he
did

did not want it, unless to buy a whip to beat Dick for his cruelty.

“What renders this child amiable in my eyes,” said Mr. Saville to his son, “is, that he regrets less the loss of the animal than its unmerited death.—For you, James, here is a sixpence with an M upon it, and that may always remind you of Mouse and Mercy, and if Dick will promise not to be cruel again, and tell me what letter K stands for, he shall have two-pence.” Dick replied K stood for Cruelty, “and Kindness too, remember,” added Mr. Saville, placing his donation in each of their hands.—Wishing the old dame a good evening, he and Charles went on.

They

They advanced till the road terminated at a stile, on the footstep of which were seated an elderly peasant, in a clean but threadbare coat, and by his side a charming round-faced girl, about twelve years old, whose even white teeth and smooth flaxen hair were the emblems of health and content. Her attire corresponded with her rustic situation, but her person, if dressed in a courtly stile, would have rivalled that of the finest princess. “And what do you think, Charles,” said Mr. Saville, “renders this personal beauty the more enchanting?”

“I can’t indeed tell,” said Charles.

“Because,” added his father, “it is accompanied by innocence and modesty.”

At the foot of the man was a parcel of furze, and the girl had put on the ground a broken pitcher of milk. They rose on seeing Mr. Saville and Charles advance, and made a respectful obeisance. "Are you that child's father?" said Mr. Saville.

"I am her uncle," replied the man, standing uncovered. "She has no father nor mother; they died of a fever three years ago, and then she came under her aunt's eye, who taught her all that she knows; when I lost my wife, she fell to my care, and, sir, we are happier than many who are richer, for she is as good and dutiful as she is pretty, and hence God will one day reward her for it."

While

While this conversation was passing, Dido, who always found a ready friend in his nose, had smelt out the pitcher of milk, and had lapped up more than half before the theft was discovered.

“O dear,” said little Ellen, “if I had known the dog had been so dry, I would have taken her to yonder spring, and there the pretty creature might have drank plenty for nothing. Come, here, — dont be afraid— I know what it is to be dry myself.”

Charles lifted up his cane, as if to beat poor Dido, but the arch little rustic took her part. “Dont beat her,” said she, “for perhaps she has not been taught better; and I am sure if I had been Dido, and any

body's supper were lying on the ground, I should have done the same."

"And is that all you have for supper?" said Charles.

"Yes, and dinner too sometimes," replied the peasant, "and I thank heaven we can get that. It is true field-work and furze-cutting will not afford any thing better, but do not think Ellen is a burthen to me. In the summer she gleans, picks hops, weeds gardens, and gathers water-cresses, whence she is seldom idle: in winter, she tends the lady's turkies at the manor-house, and in return we have as many potatoes and as much milk as she can have for fetching; so if we are not as well off as
some,

some, thousands have more reason to be sorry than we."

"The contentment you express," said Mr. Saville, "is not often to be found in a higher sphere. Come, Charles, if we keep a servant who trespasses on the property of the industrious, we ought to repay the loss; besides which, this little maid should not be forgotten; for if she so willingly parted with her humble supper to Dido, and would have conducted her to the spring, what would not her friendly little heart have parted with to us, had we been hungry or thirsty!"

"There is sixpence for the error Dido has made in her manners," said Charles; to which his father added,

“and here is a milk-white shilling, to reward Ellen’s amiable disposition.”

Mr. Saville and Charles were affected at the grateful manner in which Ellen took the money, and gave it to her uncle. “God bless her,” said the peasant; “all she gets I put by for her, against she goes out into the world.”

“And whenever that is,” said Mr. Saville, “this card will tell her where to find a friend; for virtue and goodness are of all ranks; and none are really poor but the wicked.”

They now crossed the stile into the field, and when they had gone a little way, they turned to see if the furze cutter and his niece had quitted their
seat,

seat, but they were standing on the step, earnestly looking after them, and now made a profound bow, on seeing the gentleman and his son look back.

“There is certainly a pleasure in giving,” Charles observed, “where the receivers seem so grateful.”

“True,” replied his father, “and hence it is said in Scripture that it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

They now overtook two boys who were tying a poor half-starved spaniel's legs together, and, a pond being in view, Mr. Saville guessed their intention, and demanded what they intended to do with him. They replied that he had stolen a piece of liver

off their master's stall, and as he had given them leave to do what they pleased with him, they were only going to drown him.

“And have not you often robbed the pantry?” said Mr. Saville.—
“Come, it will cost no more to save than to kill.”

One of the boys observed that he looked so wretched and ragged, he was not worth saving. “And in that case,” said Mr. Saville, “there would be no motive for saving any thing—not even you by your appearance. But if I give you a few pence to take him to my house, you will think he is worthy to live.” The boys now changed their tone, praised the dog's breed, and, with the redemption-money in their hand, flew to Saville-house,

house, where they safely delivered their charge.

Mr. Saville could not but here draw a contrast between the selfish motives of these boys, who would not even do good without a bribe, and the disinterested services of the animal they had saved. "And I think," continued Mr. Saville, "that we are often as much indebted to dogs, as they are to us. In short, I do not know a servant who costs so little, and so faithfully guards our persons, houses, and property. Dido, whom I found under our garden-wall, was in the most wretched situation when I picked her up. Ah! could she have told her tale, how many weeks she had perhaps passed without a
home

home or food, and how many kicks and buffets she had received, it would raise pity in the hardest heart."

"But," said Charles, "these were accidents, and it would indeed be wrong in them not to be grateful.— Yet, does not their fidelity arise from what they hope to get?"

"We have innumerable instances on record to the contrary," said Mr. Saville, "among which I do not recollect one more striking, or better authenticated, than the following :

"A grazier, named Donald Archer, near Paisley, in Scotland, had a long time kept a fine dog, to watch his cattle on the mountains, and on which duty he never played truant. At length,

length, Mr. Archer brought home a fine young puppy, the present of a friend, and was remarkably fond of it. From this time old Brutus became jealous, snarled at his rival as often as they met, and at last, unable to share with any one the favour of his master, he quitted his house, nor could his retreat be traced.

“ Four years after the elopement of poor Brutus, his master had been to a fair at a short distance, to sell a herd of cattle, and, returning home with the money, had advanced ten miles on his way, when a terrible tempest coming on, he was compelled to look out for shelter. No house being near, he quitted the main road, and went so deep into an adjacent wood,

wood, under cover of the trees, that he lost the path he intended, and became bewildered.

“ Afraid of robbers, he was happy to discover a smoke not far off, to which he directed his steps, hoping to get relief and information. Having crossed the path to the house, and knocked at the door, an ill looking man shewed him into a mean room. Scarcely was Mr. Archer seated, when his old servant Brutus entered, full of joy to see his former master, who was equally glad and astonished to see him at such a distance from home.

“ Not liking his landlord, the traveller did not inquire how he became possessed of Brutus. Night coming on,

on, and the rain continuing, he found it impossible to explore his way out of the wood, as the landlord informed him he was then 14 miles from Paisley. In this dilemma, he suffered himself to be shewn to a room, and lay down to repose.

“ All this while, the faithful dog had not quitted his master, but followed unperceived to his chamber, and placed himself under the bed.— The door being shut, the animal after a short interval came out, fawned upon him, and endeavoured to draw his attention to a particular corner of the room, whither he went, and saw with terror, that the floor was stained with blood, which ran
from

from a closet too securely fastened for him to force open.

“ Mr. Archer, convinced that he was in the abode of murderers, determined to sell his life as dearly as possible. Taking out his pistols, he softly opened the door, and went on tip-toe down stairs, followed by the shaggy Brutus, whose rough outside concealed a heart of the greatest courage and virtue within,—a sentiment that as often applies to us as to the diamond and the melon, whose rough exterior is compensated by their internal worth.

“ But to proceed, Charles. At the foot of the stairs, Mr. Archer stopped, and heard his villanous host in conversation with some of his accomplices,

complices, to whom he was pointing out the booty to be gained by their guest, and the time to murder him. Without hesitation, Mr. Archer burst in among them, shot the landlord, and fled through the door, attended by Brutus, before the thieves could recover their surprise. With all speed he ran until day-light, when he saw a public house in the main road, and there told his providential escape to a recruiting party, who accompanied him into the wood in search of the house.

“ The sagacious dog now served as their guide in the mazy way : on entering the house, they found it deserted. In the closet before spoken of were the murdered remains of a traveller. In the lower room, the

B scratching

scratching of Brutus near the fire-place induced them to dig up the earth, when a trap-door was discovered, beneath which lay the mangled bodies of several persons, and that of the landlord, shot through the neck, whom his companions in their flight had thrown in, thinking him past recovery; he was however cured of his wounds, tried, and executed. Thus was the life of the master saved by the attachment of his dog, and who can tell that Dido may not one day preserve us?"

"I hope," said Charles, "we shall never be placed in such an alarming situation."

"Without the protecting care of Providence," said Mr. Saville, "we are
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are never secure from harm; nor are we I think sufficiently grateful for those escapes from invisible dangers which we frequently pass unhurt through."

They had now nearly reached the end of the field, when the shoutings of some people behind inducing them to turn round, they saw a furious bull rapidly gaining upon them.— Presence of mind is preservation. Mr. Saville immediately set Dido at the animal, whose attention was so far diverted, that they had time to pass a garden-wall, and reach the door of a cottage, into which they rushed with grateful hearts that it was open. Scarcely had they explained the cause of their intrusion

to the family, when two pretty children came in, sobbing and crying, with a favourite cat in their hands, which appeared just shot.

“He has killed poor Tib at last,” said one of the little ones, “and I will get your gun, father, and shoot him, a cruel man.”

“You must not indulge in revenge,” said Mr. Saville.

“But I may shoot his cat then,” said the other little one.

“Then you would be as cruel as he,” said Mr. Saville: “No, you must learn to return good for evil.”

“It was a mercy he did not kill you,” said the woman; “he has often threatened Tib’s life, because she sometimes crossed his garden after
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the sparrows : but if we can't revenge the loss, God will."

"Our lives were indeed in danger," said Mr. Saville, "from his cruelty, for the same shot, had we been three minutes later, might have destroyed us. And in this instance the false conclusions we make are very conspicuous. In hastening from the bull, which seemed a menacing danger, we were preserved from a greater one by the random shot of the musket. Dido also, in enabling us to outrun the first evil, has repaid some of her debt of gratitude."

Mr. Saville now took leave of the children with a promise to scold this revengeful shooter, which he did in the following story :

"About the year 950, when Alka-

hem II. was Calif of Grenada, a poor woman possessed a piece of ground near his garden, which he took by force. The injured woman in despair flew to Bechir, the chief cadi of Cordova, who presented himself with a large sack before Alkahem, then seated in state on the very ground in question. Having obtained leave to fill the sack with the earth, he asked the Calif to help him to lay it on his ass; though surprised at the request, he consented, but complained of the excessive weight. "Think then," said Bechir, "if one sack be so heavy, how wilt thou at the day of judgement support the weight of the field thou hast usurped?" Mr. Saville then applied the same argument to cruelty, and they again proceeded. Their

Their ideas were soon diverted from this subject, by the rapid advance of a phaeton and four, driven by Sir David Dash, one of those unthinking beings who love to talk of the pranks they have performed at the expence of others. As he flew through the village, Charles exclaimed, that he thought it must be a fine thing to cut such a figure as Sir David did. Scarcely had he spoken these words, when the young Squire, who was very dextrous at the whip, with a touch of the lash overset a whole basket of penny pies and tarts, which an old woman was carrying on her head, and crying in her evening rounds through the village.

At the outcry of the old woman, whose pastry had fallen into a horse water trough, several of the neighbours rushed out, and added their execrations to those of the poor creature, while the unfeeling cause of the disaster with a laugh drove on, and was out of sight in a minute after.

Charles burst into a fit of laughter at the distressed appearance of the woman, as she stood lamenting her loss, and picking up the soaked fragments; but Mr. Saville was angry, and severely reprimanded him for the pleasure he seemed to take in the misfortune; adding, it would certainly be more to his credit to be in the situation of the poor ill-treated sufferer.

sufferer than this dashing young spark.

Mr. Saville now went up to the woman, and, finding a trifle would repay her loss, he gave her the sum, determined to recover it the very first opportunity he should meet with this helter-skelter runaway; and this event was not long before it took place, for, at about the distance of three hundred yards, Sir David's pride was levelled with the dust, by the fall of a boy from a tree, in robbing a bird's nest. One of the ponies taking fright, it drew the phæton so much on one side of the road, that the wheel was locked into some railing, placed to guard passengers from a deep duck-weed pond, into which

which the Knight was suddenly plunged; he was just emerging, very much hurt, when Mr. Saville, who had seen the accident, ran up to enjoy the disaster, and survey the ridiculous figure Sir David now made, which was ten times more ludicrous than that of the pie-woman at the horse-trough.

Far from commiserating his condition, Mr. Saville, who scorned to flatter folly in the rich, not only informed him that he merited the accident he had met with, but insisted that he should reimburse the poor woman for her loss, before he went a step farther. Sir David attempted at first to plead ignorance of what had happened, and then excused it

as a mere accident, but neither of these pretences would avail with the brave Mr. Saville, and thus he reluctantly was compelled to send back his servant to pay the old woman, before he could proceed.

“Now, my dear Charles,” said his father aside, “would you wish to be Sir David? How little must he have looked in the eyes of his servant; when reduced to the subterfuge of saying he did not know that he had done any mischief, and thus excite his contempt and pity.” Charles admitted that he had made too hasty a conclusion.

Sir David however was doomed at the next turnpike to undergo a farther
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ther mortification. The ponies had been stoppèd there, and as Sir David marched forward with Mr. Saville to overtake them, he entertained him with a pompous account of their high breeding, and particularly enlarged upon that one which had taken fright, which he said had cost him 60 guineas not a month back.— Arrived at the turnpike, two little chimney-sweepers were passing thro', when the youngest, throwing down his brush, leaped round the neck of the snorting poney, and kissing its black nose with all the energy of affection, exclaimed, “ Do but see, Joe ! here is our Jenny, I declare ! The pretty creature, I am sure she knows me ! ”

“ Stand

“Stand off, you little negro !” cried Sir David: “how dare you touch my horses, and tell such a story? You know any thing of that poney, indeed !”

The Knight raised his whip to drive the intruder away, but Mr. Saville reminded him that *he* had made a mistake in telling truth not many minutes before, and Charles added that the animal seemed to recognize the little sweeper.

“To be sure she does, sir,” said Joe; “for, let the gentleman say what he will, she was our master’s poney. Bill and I have driven her many a mile in our cart, so I think we must remember little Jenny; and I know his honour too, for I saw
c him

him pay six guineas to master for her in London, and Bill and I cried all night about parting with her."

Sir David was in a rage at this declaration, when Joe farther added, "Ask her to shake hands, Bill, and then it will be seen who is the storyteller."

Bill did so, and the sagacious animal put out its paw directly; the abashed young spark jumped into his phaeton, and drove off amidst the hisses of several people who had stopped to see the issue of the dispute. The boys went away well pleased, and Mr. Saville did not fail to impress upon Charles, that the grandeur which is established by falsehood

hood

hood is never safe from the torch of truth.

They now turned out of the high road, to cross a common on the other side of which lay Mr. Friendly's.—Some young men were throwing up one of the pigeons called Carriers, which, to the astonishment of Charles, they said would be at home in less than an hour, though 40 miles off. This rapidity surpassed Charles's belief, till his father thus spoke upon the subject as they passed on. -

“To give you some idea of the rapidity of the flight of birds, I will compare it with that of land-animals. The stag and rein-deer can perform a journey of 120 miles in a day, and the best race-horse will

run a league in seven minutes, or 90 miles in 12 hours; but the eagle will accomplish a distance of 600 miles in less time, and have the rest of the day for repose. Pietro del Valle says, in his voyage, that in Persia, the messenger-pigeon travels as far in a single day as a man can go in six. It is well known that a falcon of Henry II. which flew after a little bustard at Fontainbleau, was caught next morning at Malta, and known by the ring which it wore; the first place is in France, and the last in the Mediterranean sea. A Canary falcon, sent to the Duke of Lerma, returned in sixteen hours from Andalusia in Spain to the island of Teneriffe, a distance of 250 leagues. Sir Hans Sloane farther assures

assures us, that at Barbadoes the sea gulls make excursions in flocks to the distance of more than 200 miles, and return the same day."

Charles said he was convinced that the young men had spoken true, and wished that he could travel with an equal velocity. This remark induced Mr. Saville to descant upon the different construction of the lungs of birds to ours, and how soon his wish, if carried into execution, would prove fatal.

Just as they came near a farm, a half starved beggar, the emblem of death, was kneeling on the path, and drawing his hand out of a pail of wash that was intended for the sty.

With eagerness he tore the grisly morsels that adhered to some bones, and though humanely relieved by a lady passing, such was his hunger, that he dived into the pail for a second supply. There was no deception in this ; the farmer's wife saw it, and sent out a plate of broken victuals, part of which he instantly devoured, and then secured the rest in the cap that his hat had concealed. His features had once been handsome, and they seemed rather withered by misery than age.

Mr. Saville, seeing he was about to depart, dropped a trifle into his hand, and said, "Whence, my friend, proceeds this misery in a Christian country ?

country? have you no home, no friend?"

He started, and, laying his hand on his bosom, heaved a deep groan. "I should be silent," said he, "but in the hope that my anguish of soul may always be a living picture of the primary cause of my misery—disobedience to my father. I might seek an asylum in my own parish, but the comforts of society I am unworthy of, and I cannot stoop to beg.—The down of prosperity once furred my couch, and parental blessings environed my head. Listen, young sir, to my brief narrative, and may you never feel one of the many pangs I do. My perverse and ruinous conduct burst the heart-strings of a
tender

tender father, whom I brought to end his days in prison: I reduced an amiable wife to want, and this hand, driven by necessity to seek a temporary subsistence on the highway, one night, pressed by pursuit, unintentionally shot the man I most esteemed on earth. Think you that the remembrance of such crimes can ever be obliterated?—You see me crawl the most abject of beings, bending under the keen lash of conscience.

“To avoid detection, I flew abroad, and fought for seven years in the French naval service, hoping every day that some friendly shot would terminate my miserable life. At length I was taken in an engagement, my country was discovered, and

and I was put under hatches, to take my trial, the inevitable result of which would have been the death I merited. The vessel was wrecked upon my native coast, and I escaped, to be an outcast from society, and to hear my name repeatedly execrated. In this disguise, I have for seven years avoided detection; but there is an all-seeing eye, which penetrates the soul, and which I cannot shun.— Since yesternorn I have not tasted bread,— deliver me into the hand of justice, and let my sufferings terminate that career of woe which commenced in filial disobedience !”

Mr. Saville was deeply affected : he poured the balm of consolation
into

into his mind, and, instead of delivering him up to justice, to enable him to live and repent, he afterwards placed this victim of conscience in a solitary almshouse, where he died, truly penitent, in less than a twelve-month after.

“Such,” said Mr. Saville, as they turned from the mendicant, “is the inseparable connexion of crime and remorse. May it serve as a lesson to the young, not to disregard the instruction of those who reared them !”

It now suddenly came on a shower, and Charles and his father ran to an angle of the common, to take shelter under a chesnut tree, facing a handsome house, and about a hundred

dred yards off a small neat cottage. The storm increased—it thundered. Some company gazed from the mansion upon them, and a lady passed in her coach, but neither offered the worthy Mr. Saville or his son an asylum.

In a few minutes after however relief came from a quarter they did not expect. A little girl, loaded with a rough great coat and a coarse cloth, came from her uncle to offer them a shelter in his little hovel—the abode of pretty Helen and the furze-cutter. Mr. Saville accepted their kindness, and was accommodated in a manner that proved the gratitude of their hearts.

“ You

“ You now see,” said Mr. Saville, “ the folly of pride, since we are in turn happy to receive a favour from these poor cottagers.”

The storm having presently after ceased, they reached the end of their moral walk, and found that the young Friendlys had been detained by the unexpected arrival of their uncle from India.

T H E E N D .

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1926
P. E. K.

